



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FACT SHEET

Mayor Sanders Enlists Homeowners Associations in Citywide Water Conservation Efforts

Mayor Invites Property Managers, HOA Board Members and Landscape Managers to Free Conservation Class this Friday

Mayor Jerry Sanders is working to increase water conservation in San Diego by enlisting Homeowners Associations as allies. The Mayor is calling on property managers, board members and the contractors serving HOAs to learn more about water conservation options. His goal is to assist the Associations to change their landscape plantings and irrigation systems to become more water wise.

The Mayor has worked with the City's Water Department and educators from the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College to offer a free water conservation class specifically tailor to HOA members and landscaping contractors. The class is set for Friday, May 9 between 1 and 3 pm at the Rancho Bernardo Library (17110 Bernardo Center Drive). Those interested in attending can call 619-660-0614, extension 10, to make reservations.

CLASS WILL FOCUS ON HOA WATER CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

The class is one in a series of water conservation education programs being offered by the City and its partners. Attendees will learn about:

- How to correctly water current landscapes
- How to lower water use on their properties
- Potential water supply constraints
- The Model Drought Ordinance proposed by the County Water Authority.
- Updated Landscape Ordinances and their Potential Impacts on HOAs
- The benefits of hiring a Landscape Architect
- Tools and incentives available for financing irrigation system improvements, of course
- HOA success stories

CONSERVING WATER OUTDOORS PAYS OFF FOR HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Saving water outdoors can require planning and some investment in new plants or an updated irrigation system. For HOAs, the payoff from these investments can be great.

Many homeowners groups are unaware of optimum watering cycles for their landscape and give plants more water than they need. Significant water savings can be achieved by simply adjusting sprinkler timers to match plant watering needs. Savings can also be achieved by switching some or all of common landscape areas to drought tolerant and other low-water use plants.

For many HOAs, landscape irrigation currently accounts for 90 percent or more of all the water used at their properties. Cutting back on irrigation cycles or moving to less water intensive plantings can thus provide an immediate reduction in water consumption and an immediate reduction in water bills.

HELP AVAILABLE TO ASSOCIATIONS WANTING TO REDUCE OUTDOOR USAGE

There are several City programs that can help San Diegans determine optimum irrigation cycles including:

1. **Water Use Surveys** - Commercial and residential customers can call the City at (619) 570-1999 to request a survey. A trained professional will assess the current irrigation system, look for inefficiencies, and develop a customized irrigation schedule for homeowners. This service is provided free of charge.
2. **The Landscape Watering Calculator** – Homeowners interested in getting started on better irrigation practices immediately can log on to www.sandiego.gov/water and click on the Landscape Watering Calculator tab. This nationally recognized tool lets homeowners follow a few simple steps to develop a customized irrigation schedule for their yards.
3. **Weather-based irrigation Controllers** – These “smart” controllers automatically adjust run times as the season and daytime temperatures change, and shut off irrigation systems during rainy days. The City of San Diego currently offers substantial rebates for these irrigation controllers. Call (619) 570-1999, or visit www.sandiego.gov/water for more information on the rebate program.
4. **The Commercial Landscape Incentive Program** – In addition to the “smart” controller rebate program, commercial landscape property owners can also avail themselves of incentives for other water efficient irrigation fixtures. Call (619) 570-1999, or visit www.sandiego.gov/water for more information on these incentives.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WATER-WISE GARDENING

Mayor Sanders is encouraging all San Diego residents to select drought tolerant “California Friendly” plants as they prepare for the spring planting season. The “California Friendly” list includes plants that use as much as 40% less water than traditional landscape choices with many offering the added benefit of being fire resistant.

To assist in selecting ‘California Friendly’ plants, the City of San Diego Water Department has worked with the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College and others to develop a list of

‘Nifty Fifty’ plants particularly well suited to San Diego. These are non-invasive and generally available at local nurseries.

The Nifty Fifty list may be easily downloaded at www.sandiego.gov/water /conservation. A complete listing of nurseries and addresses featuring water-wise plants may be found at the Water Conservation Garden’s website at www.thegarden.org.

Located at Cuyamaca College, the 4½-acre Water Conservation Garden offers a variety of classes on many topics related to gardening and landscaping, for homeowners, children, and landscape professionals. It also has an extensive garden of ‘California Friendly’ plants, and a variety of exhibits about water-wise landscape design, maintenance, and irrigation. For more information, visit the Garden’s website or call (619) 660-0614.